



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT, COOK COUNTY BOARD PRESIDENT PRECKWINKLE AND GOVERNOR PRITZKER PARTNER TO HOST 'READINESS SUMMIT' FOR COOK COUNTY NONPROFITS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, AND SMALL BUSINESSES**

*2022 'Readiness Summit' will prepare local organizations to receive incoming, once-in-a-lifetime federal funding from the American Rescue Plan Act and other economic recovery funds*

**CHICAGO**—Today, Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle, and Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker announced their partnership to host the first ever joint 'Readiness Summit' on Friday February 4, 2022. The virtual summit will help ensure that non-profits, community organizations, and vendors throughout Cook County are aware of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and other economic recovery funding opportunities, and better understand what they need to do to be eligible for these opportunities. This summit will walk community stakeholders and small business owners through the process of how the City of Chicago, Cook County, and the State of Illinois are working collaboratively to streamline the public's access to these historic opportunities, in order to expand the impact of these once-in-a-lifetime federal investments.

"Community organizations, nonprofits, and small businesses are what make our city thrive and they deserve every access to these once-in-a-generation funding opportunities," said Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot. "This summit is our first step in ensuring that community stakeholders, especially those who have never received government grants, understand the requirements and can maximize the use of these funds. I'm grateful for the Biden Administration's leadership in distributing this funding, as well as our partnership with the State and County to build the capacity of vital community groups."

"We are engaged in an unprecedented collaborative process as we plan to distribute this transformative and historic level of funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. "This collaboration, and our upcoming



Readiness Summit, will ensure funding is granted in a strategic and equitable manner- where it can have the biggest impact in building safe and thriving communities for all."

"My administration is committed to doing everything we can to prevent violence before it happens – which is why we have prioritized investing \$250 million in on-the-ground organizations with proven records," said Governor JB Pritzker. "As we continue to support the efforts of local leaders across the state, I invite any organization interested in preventing violence to attend this informational summit and learn how to apply and manage the funding. We want to see these vital efforts up and running as soon as possible."

The virtual summit will open at 9:00AM on Friday, February 4. Following opening remarks there will be three plenary sessions helpful to any organization regardless of their area of focus. Each session will include a 15-minute Q&A period.

- The first session will be an overview of city, county, and state funding opportunities, including a general timeline of their availability.
- The second session will focus on eligibility requirements, including specific administrative guidelines and rules pertaining to the City, County, and State.
- The third session will cover compliance, reimbursements, and auditing – with special emphasis on some of the specific rules related to federal funding.

Following the plenary sessions there will be a lunch panel to help organizations and businesses better understand how to formalize their structures. After the lunch session, there will be breakout sessions tailored to non-profit organizations and small businesses and focused on specific funding areas including violence prevention, youth program, public health, community development, and infrastructure. Additional details on the Readiness Summit Agenda will be made available in the coming days.

Participants can register [here](#). The event will also be recorded and posted on City, County, and State websites.

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